

Crisiswatch 143

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In **Myanmar**, a summit of ethnic armed group leaders rejected the NCA text agreed in March, making it almost certain that the agreement will not be signed before the country goes to elections later this year. This makes it highly unlikely that there will be further progress on talks to end the decades-long conflict for the next twelve months, and increases the risk of armed conflict over the coming year. It also means more areas could be declared too insecure for elections to take place.

Negotiations on draft Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) deadlocked: leaders of armed groups meeting at 2-9 June summit declined to endorse NCA text that had been agreed by their negotiators and proposed twelve amendments (which would need to be negotiated with govt); decided that none of the sixteen armed groups would sign NCA unless all permitted to sign, and other groups (three of which currently fighting govt) should also be able to sign; and proposed current observers (UN, China and Japan) should be expanded to include ASEAN, U.S., UK, Norway, Thailand and India. Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) 11 June declared unilateral ceasefire following pressure from China, however fighting continued; govt has insisted that group must lay down its arms. Ruling Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) 10 June proposed two constitutional amendment bills in parliament; one proposing changes to eligibility requirements for presidency and constitutional amendment procedure; other proposing changes to 30 sections. Parliament 25 June rejected most amendments in first bill, including one that would remove military's veto power over other amendments. Govt started distributing new ID cards in Rakhine early June to replace Rakhine Muslims' cancelled "white cards"; with green cards: first ID that does not force Rohingya to identify as "Bengalis," no mention of ethnicity or religion; holders of these cards not on voter lists posted 22 June. Opposition leader Suu Kyi met Chinese President Xi and PM Li during visit to China from 10 June. Parliament 18 June passed amendment to education law omitting many demands of student protesters.